Sent by the Author thro' Mr Flemyng

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THOUGHTS

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UPON OUR

PRESENT SITUATION,

WITH

REMARKS

UPON THE

POLICY OF A WAR

WITH

FRANCE.

by Mr. Dallas.

LONDON:

Printed for JOHN STOCKDALE, Piccadilly.

1793.

[Price Two Shillings.]

BRITISH MUSEUM

47
10 / 9
216

THOUGHTS, &c.

THE preſent is an eventful moment. Whilſt a conſiderable part of the continent is afflicted with the calamities of war, the people of England are threatened with the proſpect of being reluctantly compelled to participate in its miſeries. But if this had been their only danger, their fears would have been quieted by the recollection of their former victories. A more ſerious evil has threatened to diſturb their internal peace; and the apprehenſion of a diſtant danger has ſubſided before the terrors of an immediate alarm. *Republicans*, *infidels*, and *levellers*, have advanced with a daring pace to aſſail the an-

cient edifice of our happineſs, and the collected loyalty of the country has been ſummoned to reſiſt the progreſs of their deſtructive fury. The mildneſs of our government has impreſſed the ſeditious with an idea, that it ceaſes to poſſeſs any power of controul; and miſtaking the benevolence of its principles for the weakneſs of its means, they have ſought, by the lure of plunder, and the proffered aid of France, to attach to their cauſe the deſperate and abandoned; and ultimately wade to property and power, through the guilty channel of anarchy, confiſcation, and ſlaughter.

Fortunately for the country, their profligate intentions became at length too evident to be concealed, and their criminal deſigns have been defeated; the poiſon imbibed by the vulgar mind from the levelling principle of Paine's productions infuſed diſcontent where ſatisfaction ſmiled before; whilſt turbulent meetings and ſeditious language ſufficiently indicated the baneful progreſs of his deſtructive philoſophy. To reſiſt ſo preſſing a danger, became the cauſe of the country at large. The love of order, the terrors of anarchy,

anarchy, the experience derived from our own hiſtory of the fatal conſequences reſulting from theſe doctrines, united minds the moſt diſcordant before, and a ſenſe of common intereſt became the link of public union.

Thus, happily, the prudence of the adminiſtration, co-operating with the energy of the community, has ſaved the metropolis from conflagration, and the conſtitution from deſtruction. Sedition is appalled, and loyalty triumphant. The great majority of the people of England are too enlightened not to revere thoſe laws by which their liberties are protected; too wiſe not to venerate that religion by which their happineſs is inſured; and too grateful not to love a Monarch whoſe only felicity conſiſts in rendering his ſubjects happy. When, therefore, the means of protection, the ſources of conſolation, the cauſes of exultation, were all attacked, they rallied round the altar, the throne, and the forum, determined to guard them uninjured, or periſh in their cauſe. The conſequence of this admirable unanimity has been a noble fervor, which, in imparting more energy to the government, has given freſh confidence to the people;

people; it animates the former, as the guardians of the public weal, to a prompt and vigorous exertion of its executive force; and it cheers the latter to a pleaſing conviction, that the fruits of their induſtry will not be raviſhed from them, by a firm reliance on the power and the diſpoſition of government to protect them from foreign enemies and domeſtic foes: thus the wiſdom of government has kept pace with the loyalty of the people, and concord and peace at home will be the happy reſult of the exertions of both.

And, in effect, what could be more wicked than to attempt to deſtroy that ſacred pedeſtal of Britiſh happineſs, which has for ſo many ages ſupported the column of our greatneſs? The conſtitution of England is not, at this day, to deduce from reaſoning its ſuperior excellence; its bleſſings are founded in experience, its utility is traced in its duration: nor ſhould we be able to diſcover to what poſſible cauſe we might attribute the wiſh of individuals to overthrow it, if we did not know that it is in the nature of ſome minds never to be ſatisfied with their preſent ſituation, however enviable, but to be perpetually

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in the purſuit of ſome additional advantage, to acquire which preſent benefits are often ſacrificed, whilſt the object purſued is frequently miſſed. The conſtitution of this country has long been the boaſt of its inhabitants, and the theme of rapture with foreign nations. Whatever parties prevailed in England, or however widely they differed upon political meaſures, yet all united in admitting, and in admiring it, as the pureſt code of legiſlative wiſdom. Nothing is more to be dreaded than a fluctuating government; and ſurely no reverſe of this kind could be more fatal than to a country like ours, whoſe enviable ſituation is the reſult of the ſteadineſs of the people and the ſtability of their government. All human inſtitution, as the work of man, muſt in its nature be imperfect, but that government is undoubtedly the beſt whoſe imperfections are the leaſt viſible, and whoſe advantages are the moſt obvious. When the conſtitution of England is examined by this teſt, the folly and the danger of attacking it will appear manifeſt. We ſhould always remember, that government is not the work of a day; it is the ſlow ſuperſtructure of maturing ages, wherein principles

ciples are brought into practice, and their effects diſcovered in the miſery or happineſs of the governed. In trying the conſtitution of England by this ſtandard, it will be found to oppoſe to innovation, good laws impartially adminiſtered, (the teſt of all good government) and they will be ſeen to extend univerſal protection to all claſſes of ſociety; and the reſult of theſe are to be traced in increaſing agriculture, extending commerce, diſſeminated property, decreaſing debt, and diminiſhing taxes. With ſuch advantages, therefore, as theſe to teſtify its excellence, thoſe trifling defects which exiſt in the opinions of ſpeculative men, or which the progreſs of time may gradually correct, if admitted to be real, ought not to be ſubjects of popular diſcontent, when its greater bleſſings are ſo deſervedly the cauſes of national exultation.

Whence is it, that with a very narrow range of territory, and a very limited population, we are the moſt powerful and wealthy nation in Europe? it all reſults from the ſuperior induſtry of the people. How is that induſtry cheriſhed? by the admirable princi-

ples of our conſtitution, which, by infuſing their energy and ſpirit into the national character, impart to it an activity and vigor, which are at once a ſtimulus to exertion, and an incentive to probity. In ſubverting theſe we corrupt ourſelves—in levelling the edifice we periſh in its fall. That the progreſs of time may even improve our conſtitution, is an event to be wiſhed; but where there is ſo little to gain, the eſſay is to be dreaded; the preſent is, at all events, a period when ſuch an experiment is moſt to be feared; and no one can juſtly be charged with inconſiſtency now, who declines to maintain his former opinions in favour of ſuch a meaſure. Thoſe opinions could only be founded upon a relative connection of circumſtances; and the principles of theſe will naturally fluctuate, as the grounds upon which they are eſtabliſhed vary. What at one period is wiſe, at another is injudicious; an alteration which a ſtate of quietude might warrant as proper, a period of turbulence would forbid as dangerous. This is the ground upon which any change ſhould at preſent be reſiſted: no one can lay down a political principle applicable at all times to the infinite fluctuations in hu-

man affairs; it muſt vary with the circumſtance, and be modified to the occaſion; and it is in a judicious diſcrimination of this, and in calmly deſpiſing the unfounded imputation of inconſiſtency, that we are to trace that temper and diſcretion in a miniſter, which is the teſt of wiſdom and the pledge of ſucceſs.

Any alteration in the ſyſtem of parliamentary repreſentation is at all times a matter of conſiderable difficulty, whilſt the advantages to be gained by it are extremely uncertain. If it is a reform upon *principle*, grounded upon abſtract right, it completely varies the preſent nature of repreſentation, from whence ſuch benefits have accrued, at the hazard of introducing the greateſt evils into the conſtitution; and if it is to be but a modification of what is denominated abuſe, it is only more likely to irritate than to ſoothe, by the admiſſion of the principle, and the reſiſtance of its application. Conſtituted as the Houſe of Commons now is, we know that it contains all that is moſt eminent with reſpect to property, to talents, to integrity, and to knowledge; the braveſt officers, the brighteſt orators, the wealthieſt individuals, and the moſt

enlightened

enlightened lawyers, are all to be ſeen in that ancient and illuſtrious aſſembly. Such men are the laſt to betray their country; the magnitude of their own ſtake is the beſt pledge of their fidelity to the public weal. But if, by alteration, an oppoſite deſcription of men ſucceed (which would certainly be the conſequence of any material departure from the preſent mode of electing our repreſentatives) we ſhould then realiſe all thoſe evils which fortunately for us hitherto, we only trace in the hiſtory of other countries. The rights of the people, and the corruption of Parliament, are the *loci communes* of every youthful orator, in his career to office, or to fame; but like the deceptions of the juggler, they only deceive the ignorant: the public have long learned to eſtimate theſe exertions rightly, and like pantomimes too often repeated, the machinery is now become too viſible to ſurpriſe. But even if their intentions were ſerious, it might fairly be aſked, what is it theſe reformers ſeek to obtain? Do they know themſelves? Do they wiſh to revive the democracy of Athens? Even that excluded equality of repreſentation annexed the right of voting to property and to citizenſhip, and

it only continued with theſe limitations in the purer times of her exiſtence before luxury had introduced itſelf within her walls; the great bulk of her inhabitants were excluded by their ſlavery from participating in the rights of election. Do they wiſh for a repreſentation as in France, where population alone is repreſented, and where thoſe claſſes of ſociety whom Athens excluded from ſuch a privilege, indiſcriminately poſſeſs it? The conſequence of ſuch a ſyſtem they have recently ſeen in the overpowering influence of the mob, which has baniſhed from their elections the higher orders of ſociety, and left the field alone to the verieſt dregs of the people. What then do they require? How are we to diſcover the medium? Mr. Fox admits he has never yet perceived it. Here is the difficulty; the danger is in ſtirring the principle; the ableſt minds are divided in the application of it, and the pureſt characters in the country deprecate, at this period, the attempt to agitate it. It is one thing to ſtruggle for power; it is another to contend for the rights of the people. The general will muſt be clearly expreſſed. It is not the glowing exertions of an orator to catch the fleeting

breath

breath of popularity, that can be conſidered as the calm dictates of the national deſire. It is not the romantic theories of ſpeculative writers that can be interpreted as the ſober organ of the public voice. Something more is required. A decaying empire and a murmuring people are awful evidences of a wicked ſyſtem; whilſt a flouriſhing kingdom, with exulting citizens, are the lively teſtimonies of an enviable government: the proſperity of the country refutes their aſſertions; the paucity of their followers diſproves their authority. Let them, therefore, be fanciful as long as they pleaſe; but let us be wiſe as long as we can; to them be the palm of ingenuity, to us be the laurel of wiſdom.

To a reflecting mind it muſt appear evident that the people of England are in poſſeſſion of as much liberty as is conſiſtent with their happineſs, and the purpoſes of good government; and that a greater extent of it would only degenerate from rational freedom into unbounded licentiouſneſs. In the moral ſyſtem of the world, there is a point of perfection at which it is prudent to pauſe; and beyond which all is, perhaps, but fanciful

improvement, and ideal perfection. It has been well obſerved by Monteſquieu, in his beautiful analyſis of our conſtitution, "that the "higheſt refinement in human reaſon is not "always the moſt deſirable, ſince mankind "are oftener made happy by mediums, than "by extremes." If, therefore, theſe men of the woods, or modern philoſophers, who wiſh to recall us to the ſhivering ſolitude of paſtoral life, would ſtudy human nature abroad, in preference to contemplating her in the ſhade of academical retreat, they would then diſcover her real, inſtead of her imagined qualities; their doctrines would become more practical than viſionary, and inſtead of tending to injure, they might contribute to advance the happineſs of ſociety. They would then learn from obſervation, what Socrates and Cicero diſcovered from experience, that men are made happy not by unreigning, but by regulating and directing their paſſions; and that the equality they preach, is the parent of anarchy, and engendered the miſeries that afflicted Greece.

That men are born free, and being born free, are born equal, are truths we have no occaſion to learn from Mr. Paine, becauſe they

are as old as the origin of their exiſtence, and have been much better explained to us by Mr. Locke, and other able writers; theſe axioms are ſelf-evident truths, but they are applicable only to men in a ſtate of nature; that is, to a ſtate in which Providence did not deſign man for ever to remain, ſince by creating him a rational animal, he formed and fitted him for ſociety.

When man therefore enters into ſociety, he is to be conſidered in a new condition; and theſe rights which are applicable to his ſituation in a ſtate of nature, no longer become practicable to retain, when he emerges from that condition to which only they can apply. It was doubtleſs an experience of the evils reſulting from a ſtate of nature that firſt prompted men to form themſelves into political communities, and to reſolve upon government. Now, what is government, but a ſyſtem of legiſlation? that is to ſay, the art of framing and executing wiſe laws, which it is the nobleſt duty of human wiſdom to diſcharge; and what is wiſdom, but knowledge ripened by experience, and uſefully applied? If wiſdom, therefore, were univerſally diffuſed,

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it would obviate the neceſſity of government, ſince it would teach all men to act rightly, which it is the end of government to compel them to do; but as this is not the caſe, it is in the nature of wiſdom, by its ſuperiority, to excite our reverence, and take the lead in human affairs. Now, as power is judiciouſly veſted in the hands of a few, for the benefit of the many, ſo wiſdom appears to be the truſt of ſome, for the happineſs of all. Accordingly, the ableſt men have always been employed in the ſuperſtructure and management of government; becauſe the happineſs of mankind conſiſting greatly in being well governed, it belongs to wiſdom, from its comprehenſive, power to deviſe that ſyſtem moſt likely to produce the end, and not to ignorance, which from being ſurrounded with darkneſs, muſt be perpetually wandering into error.

It is therefore in the order of things, that ſuperior reaſon ſhould direct and govern. Now, as human reaſon is as infinite in its qualities and extent, as the ſub-diviſions of a ſolid body into particles; it follows, that in civil ſociety, one great feature of perpetual inequality muſt ever exiſt, as a diſtinctive

mark between wiſdom and ignorance, and as a beacon to direct into the road of reaſon, thoſe who through ignorance or prejudice may miſs its way.

In a ſtate of reaſon, therefore, which begets political ſociety, men are not equal, ſince their capacities are ſo different. Why, then, ſhould we be wrangling about thoſe rights in a ſtate of nature, which no longer exiſts, which our progenitors were happy to relinquiſh, and which, if revived, by extinguiſhing art and ſcience, would only recall us to the miſeries of ſavage life? Right reaſon conſiſts in a practical application of its powers, to meliorate and improve our condition; and not in the ingenious exertion of deducing, from abſtract theories, inapplicable concluſions to the exiſting condition of ſociety.

The more we examine into the nature of civil ſociety, the more we ſhall diſcover thoſe diſtinctions which evidently mark it to be a ſtate of inequality; and every where this phantom of equality will diſappear, when tried by the touchſtone of reaſon. If men were morally and phyſically equal, their con-

ditions would be ſimilar; but this is not the caſe; and why? becauſe their principles are as various as their underſtandings: ſome are more virtuous, others more enlightened, and others more induſtrious; to theſe, therefore, juſtly belong all the ſuperior diſtinctions reſulting from the acquiſition of character, of wiſdom, and of property. And this is the origin of thoſe gradations in ſociety, which illuſtrate the beauty and utility of ſubordination, which by rendering us all dependant upon each other, conſtitute the harmony of the whole, by uniting ſociety in one great maſs of common intereſt, by ſhewing them that they are all equally neceſſary to the ſupport of each other; for knowledge inſtructs ignorance, property feeds induſtry, induſtry nurtures opulence, and opulence protects the ſtate. And this is the only rational way in which we can be ſaid to be all equal; that is, by our inability to exiſt without relative dependance, and ſupport. This is the equality philoſophy muſt approve, becauſe it is founded in reaſon and experience, and is the unavoidable reſult of that variety of ſhade in the human character, that marks the diſtinctions of the human race.

Inſtead,

Inſtead, therefore, of roaring out that we are free, and of caſting ignorance adrift upon the tempeſtuous ocean of prejudice and paſſion, let us rather inculcate the doctrine of a reciprocal dependance, founded in mutual want, and mutual intereſt. Inſtead of ſevering all thoſe bonds which unite ſociety, let us endeavour to render them more firm by the practice of a juſt philoſophy among the higheſt claſſes of ſociety, and by cultivating common ſenſe among the lower; for ſince the characters of mankind are ſo various, their ſituations muſt be always equally diſſimilar. To tell the peaſant he is *free*, is to hold out to him a language he may not rightly comprehend; unpracticed in the knowledge of abſtract terms, and unhabituated to inveſtigate the relative agreement or diſagreement of his ideas, he will only, perhaps, be induced into error, and be led to think that in being free, he is removed from reſtraint: he will not conſider, that liberty conſiſts in doing what is not forbidden by the law, but he will conſider that to be free is to be maſter of his actions, and that the coercion of law is a reſtraint upon his natural right. All government will then appear to him a ty-

ranny, and that content he enjoyed in his ignorance, will be ſupplanted by the diſſatisfaction he will feel upon this new light illuminating his mind: to talk to him of his *equality*, will only be to aggravate his diſcontent; he will not conſider that it is an equality of civil right founded in that general protection which the law enſures to all; but he will conſider it in the way moſt natural to an unenlightened mind: he will conſider, that if he is equal to all men, none are his ſuperiors; that *property* like *right* ſhould reciprocally be ſhared; and in feeling that he has none, he will fancy his opulent neighbour has monopoliſed his portion: he will not reaſon upon the diſtinctions which conſtitute the difference; but in conſidering that he is *free*, and that he is *equal*, he will fancy that tyranny and injuſtice have fettered his actions, and plundered him of his rights. Thus deluded, he is driven to act upon his prejudices, and to exchange for the habits of induſtry, and its conſequent bleſſings, a career of idleneſs, and its natural attendants, poverty and diſcontent.

Inſtead,

Inſtead, therefore, of corrupting the good ſenſe of mankind, and of ſubverting their happineſs, by enſnaring them with the perplexity and deluſions of abſtract reaſoning, let us rather endeavour to apply human reaſon to general conception, by enforcing this great practical truth upon the public mind; that eſtabliſhed advantages are preferable to theoretical benefits; and that ſince it is in the nature of things, that inequalities ſhould ſubſiſt in ſociety, to deſtroy theſe, by reducing all mankind to a level, would only be to ſubſtitute anarchy to order, and to degrade human induſtry and human virtue, by confounding it with public miſery, and public ſhame.

If any event can forcibly delineate the dangerous tendency of the levelling doctrines ſo lately introduced amongſt us, it is the melancholy example of what the theory produces when realized into practice. Let us turn to France, and behold the mournful picture of an agitated empire; where the day dawns, but to uſher in crimes; where the night ſucceeds, but to bring with it horror; where ferocity pauſes upon the cruelties of the day, anxiouſly awaiting the morrow to renew them;

them; and where, in the profanation of nature and ſentiment, humanity lies buried in the tomb of juſtice!

Horror ubique animos ſimul ipſa ſilentia terrent.
VIRG.

In the infancy of that revolution, the people of England undoubtedly applauded the event; they viewed it with indulgence and philanthropy; to them it appeared as the ſun of a mild philoſophy diſperſing the night of deſpotiſm, and cheering a great people to awake from the ſorrows of oppreſſion, and enjoy the triumph of recovered rights. In proportion, therefore, as they rejoiced to ſee them emancipated from bondage, they lamented to ſee them enſlaved by an anarchy more grinding than the blackeſt tyranny recorded in the pages of deſpotiſm. Under kingly power, they had ſomething to conſole them under their ſufferings. Beneath their preſent rulers they have nothing to mitigate their miſeries: with their kings they had laws they reſpected, they had magiſtrates they eſteemed, they had a religion they revered. With their demagogues they have laws without energy, magiſtrates without attention, and

minds without faith. Where is their ſociety? diſorganized! Where is their government? annihilated! Where is their religion? proſtrate with the bleeding victims of her diſmantled altars! Where is their ſovereign? hurled from a throne his humanity adorned! Is this a revolution? Is it the ſubſtitution of civil liberty to military deſpotiſm, or is it the exchange of ſavage anarchy for ſocial order? Our own revolution, as well as the revolutions in other countries, have been attended with circumſtances ſo meliorating to the condition of the people for whoſe welfare they were undertaken, that they have given a charm to the very term that faſcinates us with its ſound. But is there any analogy between this revolution, and thoſe in other countries we are ſo juſtly habituated to admire? In truth, there is ſcarcely a feature of ſimilitude to mark the parallel: humanity adorned the triumphs of the former, cruelty degrades the victories of the latter. The revolution in Holland was provoked by the moſt intolerant deſpotiſm; the ferocious will of Philip was enforced by the military oppreſſion of his Spaniſh legions; and Egmont and Horn, the idols of the people, had already periſhed upon the ſcaffold,

ſold, victims to his vengeance. With them it was the voice of deſpair that broke forth; it was the ſtruggle of virtue that commenced: and during that long conteſt from the year 1568, until the ſplendid hour of its termination, by the final acknowledgement of their independence, we know not which moſt to admire, the wiſdom of their leaders, or the virtues of their people: they preyed not upon the bowels of each other; they only turned their ſwords upon the enemy; inſtead of deſtroying their nobles, they fought under their banners; and it was the chief of their ariſtocracy, who immortaliſed himſelf, by giving freedom to his country. They ſought not to revile the character of every ſovereign, and to arm his ſubjects againſt him; they only exclaimed at the injuſtice of Philip, and confined their philoſophy to their wrongs. Society inſtead of being outraged by their conduct, were charmed with the magnanimity of their ſtruggle, and Henry and Elizabeth united to aſſiſt them in defeating their oppreſſor. All Europe, therefore, applauded the ſtruggle of that brave and induſtrious people, whoſe former ſucceſs in repelling the ocean from their ſhores, was

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a happy omen of their caſting tyranny from their ſoil.

With reſpect to the revolution in America, it was the unfortunate conſequence of our perſiſting in a claim which they conſidered as a new and hoſtile innovation; and it was only when the hope of conciliation expired, that the appeal to arms commenced. In the progreſs of the conteſt, the ſtruggle was ſteady, and the termination proſperous.—They never abandoned their religion; they never oppreſſed their clergy; they never broke down the mounds of morality, to incorporate themſelves with the Savages in their woods: but, firm and united in morals, and in action, they commanded the eſteem of their enemies, and the friendſhip of Europe. With them, as with us, civil war loſt half its fury, in the humanity of both nations, and mutual reſpect ſucceeded, when mutual peace enſued. America, inſtead of perſecuting the patriots to whom ſhe was indebted for her independence, rewarded them with the tribute of her gratitude; and when the tumult of arms was over, ſhe called them to conſolidate her happineſs, by preſiding over

the government their exertions had eſtabliſhed. Between theſe two caſes, therefore, there is no analogy, either in the cauſe that provoked the conteſt, or in the means adopted to haſten its termination.

Under what circumſtances was the revolution in England effected? The profligate ingratitude of Charles had long diſguſted the people; and the bigotted folly of James completed the meaſure of their reſentment with them; it was to reſcue their perſons from oppreſſion, their laws from violation, and their religion from deſtruction, that they took up arms. Theſe objects attained, they proceeded no farther. It was not their intention to put an end to the government; it was not their wiſh to diſband ſociety; they ſought not to ſubſtitute, to the ſober inſtitutes of moral and political experience, the fanciful ſyſtems of an impracticable philoſophy.—They wiſely ſtopped at the root of the grievance; and eradicating that, they only recalled the conſtitution to its original principles. Thus, by judiciouſly avoiding fallacious refinement, and preferring the ſobriety of plain ſenſe to the jargon of metaphyſics,

phyſics, they happily arrived at the end, without deſtroying monarchy, or convulſing ſociety.

In all theſe caſes, therefore, ſome new grievance, which appeared to the people too intolerable to endure, was the immediate cauſe that produced them. But the revolution in France exhibits no ſuch irreſiſtible motives to account for a nation riſing into reſiſtance at once, and burſting from thoſe bonds by which ſhe had hitherto been united. No deed of vengeance had excited public clamour. No act of oppreſſion had engendered national deſpair. The government, it is true, was arbitrary, and a radical change in its ſyſtem was an event to be deſired: but the general wiſh to promote it was more the reſult of diſſeminated knowledge, than the conſequence of any additional grievance to eſtabliſh the neceſſity for ſubverting it to the foundation. Contrary to other revolutions, therefore, it began at a period when leaſt it appeared as likely to enſue; inaſmuch as that the extenſive power of the King had never been exerciſed but in acts of juſtice, or conceſſions of prerogative. It was the mildeſt

reign recorded in the annals of a deſpotic ſtate: and it has this ſingular feature to contraſt it with the preſent æra, that in one ſhort day the popular tribunals of France have ſhed more blood, than was ſpilt during a long adminiſtration of eighteen years.

Under Louis XIV. the vices of the Court, the deſpotiſm of the government, the enormous expenditure of the ſtate, and the memorable oppreſſions upon the people, were ſufficient cauſes to provoke deſpair, and irritate a nation into arms: yet the people were ſilent. Under the preſent unfortunate King, his own virtues, the mildneſs of his adminiſtration, and the improving condition of his country, were adequate incentives to kindle public affection: yet the people were clamorous. Louis XIV. retained a power he merited to loſe. Louis XVI. loſt an authority he deſerved to retain. The victories of Louis XIV. entailed miſery upon his kingdom. The triumphs of Louis XVI. imparted to it proſperity. The one lived in his palace, oppreſſed with remorſe; the other exiſts, in his priſon, ſuſtained by ſerenity. A nation triumphed in the death

of

of the former; poſterity will weep over the tomb of the latter. Hiſtory ſhall mourn the cataſtrophe of his fate, and humanity revere the page made ſacred by his wrongs. It is then that the hiſtorian, diſdaining the injuſtice of the day, will reſcue his injured memory from the pollutions of an ungrateful age, and conſecrate his innocence and fame, by proving, that his only crime conſiſted in the gentleneſs of his character, and in his having raiſed the glory of his country to a higher pitch than it had yet attained, by curbing the power of England, and laying the foundation of freedom in the Weſtern hemiſphere.——Unhappy prince! to what purpoſe did he undertake it, but to entomb himſelf beneath the edifice! It was not, therefore, the wrongs of the people, at the moment, that arouzed them to ſhake off the deſpotiſm of ages; it was the relaxation in the power of the King that encouraged them to regenerate their conſtitution. And how has the ſtructure been reared?—Upon the ruins of monarchy; upon the property of the plundered; upon the ſighs of the orphan, and the tears of the widow!——The ſword of juſtice has been converted into a

weapon

weapon of attack. Her temple is closed, and her altar has been stained with the bleeding offerings of unsatiated revenge. The proscriptions of Sylla and Marius have alternately crimsoned the metropolis with blood, and the dead and the dying have been dragged through her streets as the mutilated monuments of carnage and despair! What was the signal for these disastrous scenes? the benevolent expression of the King to the States, "*Come, partake of my power, and* "*give me more of your love.*" The people rushed to his call, but, alas, how! to deprive him of his authority in the end, and aspire at his life. What has been the fate of those who laboured to restrain their excesses? to fall in the contest, or fly from their fury. What has been the reward of those who endeavoured to establish for them a good government? to be despised for their moderation, or to be persecuted for their virtue. Holland perpetuated her obligations to William of Orange, by rendering the Chief Magistracy hereditary in his family; America rewarded her Washington by raising him to preside over her government; and England bestowed her crown upon her deliverer,

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Theſe were the grateful offerings of exulting nations, who, in the conſciouſneſs of the bleſſings they had acquired, felt their pride and their honour alike intereſted in rewarding thoſe great men, by whoſe exertions they were attained. But how different is the contraſt with France! Where are thoſe enlightened leaders, who laboured in the Conſtituent Aſſembly to ſtrengthen their conqueſt by the rampart of a good government? impeached, proſcribed, or doomed in foreign countries to ſeek a refuge from aſſaſſin ſlaughter! Where is the inflexible integrity, the unbending virtue, of a Fayette? ſheltered from the poignard of France, in the dungeons of Pruſſia! Where are the virtues and ſervices of a Rochefoucault? caſt by the coward dagger to a grave of glory! as if the pre-eminence of merit added ſtrength to hatred; as if the weakneſs of age gave force to ferocity! Who triumphs upon the ruins of their fame? wretches, who came from the caverns of diſgrace! Theſe are the heroes of the day, diſtributing the work of death, and bearing in the tainted air the bloody trophies of eternal ſhame!

On the whole, therefore, there is nothing in this revolution that can in the ſmalleſt degree be aſſimilated with thoſe which mankind have hitherto united to applaud. It ſtands aloof from all compariſon. New in its cauſe, ſingular in its progreſs, and fatal in its example. It ſtands as a ſingle monument of crime, to inſtruct and to forewarn. Cruelty to their King, ingratitude to their deliverers, injuſtice to their neighbours, and inſolence to their God.—Theſe are the guilty features of its criminal aſpect! It exhibits, in the ſilence of the laws, the gloomy reign of oppreſſion, and marks, by increaſing anarchy, the difficulty of reſtoring them to energy, when the people have been taught to violate them with impunity. It ſhews, that the mind of man muſt be prepared for liberty before he is qualified to enjoy it; and that without he is habituated to eſtimate aright its nature, he will only convert into a ſcourge, what, if well underſtood, is a bleſſing to all. Few wiſhed to hurry France into her preſent ſituation; her beſt patriots juſtly contended for a reformation of abuſes, but none aſpired at the fatal means of removing them by accumulating tenfold miſery upon the country;

none ſought to change the very nature of man—to convert reaſon into folly, piety to infidelity, civilization to ferocity, and juſtice into vengeance. Yet, ſuch have been the melancholy effects of this diſaſtrous change, wherein humanity knows not which moſt to deplore, the illuſions of the people, or the wickedneſs of their rulers. Poſterity will behold in this awful example of an enlightened nation receding into barbariſm, the inevitable evils reſulting from a ſudden and convulſive change in the eſtabliſhed principles of moral, civil, and religious obligation; and whilſt they peruſe it with ſorrow, may it guard them from the danger of aſpiring to imitate it! in this caſe it will not have proved an uninſtructive leſſon to future ages. Hiſtory now ſhall treaſure up its facts; philoſophy hereafter will dwell upon their conſequences.

Hitherto we have only viewed the French Revolution in a moral light, as it affects themſelves; but the gradual extenſion of the miſchief, united to the ſingular progreſs of their arms, compels us to view it in a political conſideration, as it operates upon the intereſts

of our neighbours, and as it may ultimately endanger our own ſituation. Whilſt anarchy was confined within their own provinces, and their philoſophy directed only to undo themſelves, we gazed with regret upon the ſcene, and ſtood paſſive ſpectators of the havock: but when, like the lava of Veſuvius, it has burſt from its crater, to deſolate the country around, it becomes us to look at the progreſs of its courſe, if we wiſh to remove from the way of its miſchief. When, therefore, we ſee it pointing its fiery ſtream to England, it is time to abandon the poſition of inaction, and encounter its force with oppoſing exertion. Whilſt France conſidered only what form of government was beſt ſuited to the manners and the genius of her people, we never preſumed to interfere in directing the ſtructure; but when, in the inſolence of victory, they dare to point out to the reſt of Europe, that their's is the ſyſtem of government their ſubjects muſt adopt, it is time to aſſert our rights, and to ſhew to the world, that we will not be enſlaved; the feelings of the country will be with us, for they will conſider, that to receive laws from a Frenchman is to receive chains from an enemy. Let us

not, therefore, idly ſtand beholding the volcano, but let us preſs forward, and throw up a rampart to check the irruption. That we are warranted in doing this by every conſideration of prudence, policy, and juſtice, a few reflections will ſhew. For this purpoſe, let us compare the conduct of England at preſent, with the conduct of France heretofore. The contraſt is as honourable to us as it is diſgraceful to them. It will then appear, from her former attempts, and her recent injuſtice, how little we have reaſon to hope, that any change in her government can ſubdue her enmity to the people of this country.

It cannot be forgotten by England, that when we were unhappily engaged in a war with America, the French avoided entering into that quarrel until the moment when they ſaw us bending beneath the weight of the ſtruggle. They then threw off the maſk they had worn from the commencement of the conteſt, and giving way to their uſual zeal to ruin us, they involved us in a long and bloody war, united their arms to the American cauſe, and finally emancipated that

country for ever from her dependence upon the Britiſh nation.

How have we returned the injury in the hour of their own convulſions? not by fomenting their diviſions, not by taking advantage of their difficulties to attack them, not by uniting with foreign powers to invade and divide their country, but by a right adherence to a generous neutrality; exhibiting thereby to foreign nations a rare example, that our ſenſe of juſtice is ſuperior to the remembrance of our injuries; that peace buried reſentments; and that the recollection of Gallic perfidy cannot induce us to violate the principles of Britiſh faith. We ſcorned to acquire an advantage at the expence of the national character, and diſdained to retort a wrong at the riſk of appearing to imitate their injuſtice.

How have they repaid our forbearance? How have they returned our generoſity? By acts the moſt hoſtile, and means the moſt baſe. Inſtead of convincing us, that our former injuries aroſe from the defects of their ancient government, they have offered ſuch

inſult

inſult to us, to ſhew that our preſent complaints ariſe from the vices of their new ſyſtem. Inſtead of endeavouring to conciliate our eſteem by the moderation of their conduct, they have ſought to provoke our contempt by the wildneſs of their meaſures. Have not our laws, our conſtitution, and our King, been alternately the ſubjects of foul invective and indecent reproach in their public aſſemblies? Have they not encouraged ſecret deſigns, and open attacks, upon the exiſting government of this country? Have they not fanned the torch of ſedition among us, by beſtowing their approbation upon the rebel addreſſes tranſmitted to them by the miſerable traitors we are now united to oppoſe? Is it not upon the evidence of their own records, that their Miniſter of Juſtice propoſed to eſtabliſh a "*Committee of Inſurrection*," for the expreſs purpoſe of overthrowing every exiſting monarchy in Europe? Have not the National Convention ſolemnly proclaimed a decree, tranſlated by their orders into every European language, whereby all nations who wiſh to recover, what they conſider as their rights, are invited to apply to their generals for aſſiſtance?

and

and what has been the conſequence of this open and avowed ſyſtem of hoſtility upon our patient forbearance? Generoſity has been miſtaken for weakneſs, and ſedition, preſuming upon inaction, has aimed at the deſtruction of our conſtitution. What, in effect, was this decree, but to invite rebellion to unfurl her crimſon banner? And what has been its conſequence, but to ſpread general apprehenſion throughout Europe? Are we not proclaimed to be in a ſtate of alarm and danger? And are we not admitted to be ſo by the loyal aſſociations of every county united to rally round the King and the laws? What cauſes the alarm? their decrees. What conſtitutes the danger? their meaſures. Who provokes our brave militia to the field at this inclement ſeaſon of the year? a coalition of French incendiaries with Britiſh traitors. What occaſions our Parliament to meet at a period ſo much earlier than uſual? French injuſtice. To whom are we indebted for the additional expences attendant upon theſe juſt meaſures of precaution? to French treachery. In ſhort, all that we experience juſt now, increaſed expences, general alarm, and admitted danger, all are to be attributed to their

inſults,

inſults, their intrigues, and their unrelenting exertions to provoke us to a war, in the hope that ſuch an event may enable them to overthrow our government, and ultimately reduce us to the level of their own wretchedneſs. And this unparalleled ſyſtem of unprovoked injuſtice, is the only return they have to make to us for our having ſtudiouſly avoided to interfere in their diſſenſions, or to depart from that neutrality which we have hitherto preſerved; and which, in expoſing us to the cenſure of Europe, ought at leaſt to have entitled us to the gratitude of France.

But it ſeems, it is not enough that they ſhould thus openly avow their inimical deſigns againſt England. Confiding in their ſtrength, they have equally endeavoured to involve our allies, the Dutch, in their general proſcription of exiſting governments. Although France guarantied with ourſelves, by the treaty of Munſter, the right of the Dutch to the excluſive navigation of the Scheld; and notwithſtanding that by the treaty of 1788, with Holland, we again became virtually bound to maintain them in the poſſeſſion of this privilege, yet in deſpight of an ancient

right

right confirmed by themſelves, and in oppoſition to their knowledge that we are bound to preſerve them in the poſſeſſion of it, they have committed an unjuſt aggreſſion, by forcibly ſailing up the Scheld, with veſſels of war, to beſiege Antwerp. This poſitive infringement upon the law of nations has been perpetrated in defiance of the remonſtrance of the Dutch. And, as if anxious only to add inſult to injury, the Executive Council of France have publiſhed, that they will maintain the navigation of this River open to all nations, in violation of exiſting treaties, in contempt of the independent and ſovereign power of Holland, and in defiance of the protection of England. What is this but to brave us to the conteſt, and to endeavour to defend by force, what they cannot vindicate by juſtice? The moment we deſert our allies, we abandon ourſelves, for we depart from our national character. And it is eaſy to foreſee, when the Dutch have been the victims of plunder, we ſhall become the ſubjects of attack. There cannot therefore be a doubt, as the rights of our allies have been invaded, but that we are bound to interfere, by performing the conditions of our treaty,

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whenever they ſummon us to reſiſt the invaſion.

If, then, the Dutch determine to maintain theſe rights inviolate, either the French muſt recede, or the national energy muſt be exerted to compel them: for it is in vain to make treaties, if we will not adhere to them. It is only to partake of the diſhonour of an ally, to behold him inſulted with impunity. Whilſt they are referring every thing to the laws of nature, let us have recourſe to the law of nations. Would France have dared, when a monarchy, to have offered ſuch an inſult to our allies? Would Holland, or England, have endured it in ſilence? If it would have been inſulting at that period, what renders it leſs provoking at the preſent moment? Perhaps it is more ſo, inaſmuch as that their preſent rulers profeſs to act upon principles oppoſite to thoſe by which they aſſert their former adminiſtrations to have been influenced, and to ground their conduct upon moderation and good faith. The outrage, therefore, is the more glaring. But the truth is, England at no period would have endured ſuch an inſult,

to an ally, when called upon to redreſs it: and it is not to be expected that ſhe will ſubmit to it with impunity, in the hour when ſhe has moſt the means of reſiſting it, from the flouriſhing condition of her power, and the proſperous ſituation of her reſources. Her greatneſs muſt even be founded in her juſtice: the moment ſhe departs from a ſenſe of what is due to herſelf, and what ſhe owes to her allies, ſhe will not only ceaſe to poſſeſs that degree of political conſideration ſhe now maintains in the eyes of Europe, but, in parting with her character, ſhe will aſſuredly loſe her independence. Upon every principle, therefore, of juſtice, good faith, and ſound policy, we are bound to interfere upon the preſent occaſion, not only by maintaining the faith of treaties inviolate, but by compelling the French to deſiſt from their navigation on that River.

Can any impartial mind, who has obſerved the progreſs of events, ſince the commencement of the French revolution, contend that we have not a cauſe for alarm, and a ſerious occaſion for complaint? In the infancy of this hitherto calamitous event, they ſought to inte-

reſt in their favour the different powers of Europe by the philanthropy of their language. They ſolemnly proclaimed to every court, that the æra of juſtice was arrived; that France, contented with the advantages which the recovery of her rights enſured to her, would learn, from the acquiſition of ſuch a treaſure, to reſpect hereafter the poſſeſſions of others; and as a pledge of her zeal to perpetuate the bleſſings of peace throughout Europe, ſhe renounced for ever the idea of conqueſt, and, ſatisfied with the extent of her power and dominions, finally abjured all intention of enlarging either, by farther acquiſition. But how has their conduct anſwered to their philoſophy?—by proving it to be unprincipled; by ſhewing that at the very moment when they profeſſed moderation, they meditated conqueſt; and that whilſt they were deceiving others into ſecurity, they were perfidiouſly preparing themſelves to aſpire at univerſal empire. What is the actual condition of France? A curſory review will ſhew how much its former limits have been extended.

At an early period of their revolution, they broke through the above declaration, and, in violation of every principle of right or juſtice, they commenced their uſurpations by annexing Avignon, then under Papal authority, to their own dominions, upon the plea of its having made formerly a part of France. They then decreed war againſt the houſe of Auſtria, with all the phrenzy of tumultuous uproar, and emancipating the Auſtrian Netherlands from the dominion of the Emperor, they have now reduced them to a dependency upon her power. That object they have gained, without interruption, which England laviſhed her beſt blood and treaſure, to prevent Louis XIV. from acquiring; and that barrier between them and Holland, which we have hitherto conſidered as a fence againſt the power and ambition of France, has been completely broke down by the victory of Jemappe, and laid open to their incurſions the territories of our allies. With the ſame belligerent ſpirit they declared war againſt the King of Sardinia, unprovoked by any hoſtility on his part to juſtify ſuch a meaſure; and after having conquered the Duchy of Savoy, they have finally decreed it to be added

as an eighty-fourth department to their empire. In Germany their irruptions have been marked with conqueſt; and they have already avowed an intention of throwing the electorate of Mayence as an additional weight into the ſcale of their power. Even the little Republic of Geneva, that peaceful ſeminary of ſcience, arts, and virtue, could not eſcape the fury of their proſcription. One of her own rebel citizens had the unnatural triumph of turning the arms of France againſt the boſom of his country, and of compelling her to ſubmit to the galling yoke of a barbarous invader. If wickedneſs can exult in the perpetration of its crimes, to him be the guilty privilege of ſaying—I have humbled my country. I have betrayed her intereſts. I compelled her induſtrious citizens to take arms, in vain, to defend her honour. I forced them to their ramparts to witneſs their humiliation; and I drove their manufacturers to receive from the bounty of England, that bread which they loſt by the troubles I created! Let me not die like Cato, in preference to beholding my country fall; but rather let me live like Cataline, to be the daring inſtrument of accompliſhing her ruin!—

Not

Not only has this amiable Republic been thus treated, but even after General Monteſquieu had entered into a treaty with the inhabitants of Geneva, whereby they left themſelves defenceleſs, the National Convention, as if only anxious to prove that their injuſtice was commenſurate with their power, annulled it at once, and compelled them to enter into a freſh agreement, as an additional badge of humiliation to Geneva, and a farther proof of triumph to France. What is this, but to act upon the principles of the Roman Republic, who, as an admired juriſt obſerves, never made a treaty with good faith, but conſidered it rather as a ſuſpenſion from war, than a confirmation of peace. Even at this moment an army under Kellerman is deſtined to attempt an invaſion into Italy, and the reduction of that country, together with the deſtruction of thoſe beautiful veſtiges of the fine arts which yet adorn that claſſic ground, will be the probable conſequence of ſuch an irruption. What Alaric effected with the ancient Goths, Kellerman will perpetrate with the modern Vandals. The ſoil, yet venerable from the ruins it exhibits of its an-

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cient greatneſs, will be ſtained by a war againſt the remnants of its arts, and the country of Cicero and Atticus will again be polluted with the exceſſes of triumphant barbarity. Such is the mutability of human affairs! The age of darkneſs is renewed, when the progreſs of knowledge appeared to have extinguiſhed it for ever. But to proceed: On the ſide of Switzerland, what has happened? Encouraged by the decree of the 19th of November laſt, inviting all nations to rebel againſt their governors, the inhabitants of Porentu have revolted from their allegiance, and upon an application to the National Convention for aſſiſtance, they have inſtructed their General in that quarter to yield it: in return, the revolters entreat to be incorporated with France. The Biſhopric of Liege has already been reduced by Dumourier, as well as Auſtrian Gueldres by Miranda. And although the inhabitants of the conquered countries are left to rebuild their governments anew, yet, it is only with a proviſo of modelling them upon the principles of the French Republic, as may be ſeen by the manifeſto recently addreſſed to the Belgians by Dumourier, and by the decree

cree of the National Convention of the 15th of laſt month, whereby they are directed to annihilate their nobility, extirpate their clergy, and corporations, and finally eſtabliſh a perfect democracy upon the ruins of both. Thus, like the Spartans, they are not merely ſatisfied with ſubduing their opponents, but ſeek an additional ſecurity for their own ſyſtem of government, by compelling their neighbours to adopt it.

On the whole, therefore, it is clear that the French have departed from their original humane principle of abſtaining from conqueſt, and have ſubſtituted for it, a ſpirit of domineering ambition, and a uniform oppreſſive ſyſtem of lawleſs violence and outrage. The conſequence of this has been a great acquiſition of territory, and a conſiderable addition of power, beyond what they lately poſſeſſed. This cannot fail to excite alarm, and arouſe the indignation of this, and every other country in Europe. For if they are actuated in their conduct hereafter, by the principles which now govern them, it is evident that in proportion as their power is extended, their means of conqueſt muſt increaſe; and the inevitable re-

ſult of this will be, that the inferior ſtates in their vicinity will be reduced to their dominion, in the ſame manner that Rome, as ſhe extended her power, ſubdued every province around her.

It has juſtly been obſerved by the ingenious and learned Doctor Gilles, in his review of the Grecian States, "*that no Republic* "*ever felt itſelf in a ſituation to harraſs its* "*neighbours, without taking the firſt opportu-* "*nity to do ſo.*" This principle he deduced from their conduct to each other, and the preſent aggreſſions of the French evince how forcibly it applies to them. Indeed, ſuch muſt ever be the caſe, where the powers of a country are multifarious, and not properly balanced; and where popular uproar decides upon queſtions of national moment. And, in effect, we ſee that the fierce ſpirit, and rough manners, concomitant to a republican form of government, have ever had a tendency to generate turbulence, and to animate a nation more to the purſuits of war, than to encourage them to cultivate the arts of peace. Hence it was, (as Monteſquieu remarks) that under the conſular of power of

Rome, the magiſtrates were ever perſuading the ſenate to ſtir up the people to war, and pointed out to them new enemies; which the ſenate were ſufficiently diſpoſed to encourage them to attack, to free themſelves from the perpetual demands of the people, and to remove the occaſion of their diſquiet, by employing them in foreign wars: and hence it is, that the Executive Council of France are perpetually propoſing to the National Aſſembly ſome new irruption, to excite a martial ſpirit among the people, to ſilence the clamour of reproach, and veil their miſery by the deluſive ſplendor of their conqueſts.

It well becomes us, therefore, to conſider, what effect this unreſtrained ſpirit of conqueſt may have upon the general ſafety and happineſs of Europe? and whether the dreadful, propagation of this iſlam of democracy by fire and ſword, may not convulſe Europe to its center, and ultimately communicate its deſtructive ſhock to the inhabitants of this happy iſland? If the preſervation of our political and commercial advantages has hitherto depended upon reſtraining the power of France within due bounds, and of co-operating

ting to maintain a balance of power throughout Europe, as the beſt means of ſecuring the public peace, ſurely, good policy directs that we ſhould continue to cheriſh an equilibrium, by which extenſive and momentous intereſts are protected. How is this to be done? by maintaining our aſcendency, and ſupporting the general ſyſtem of continental power as lately exiſting. For this purpoſe, we ought not to ſuffer France to aggrandize herſelf beyond the limits of her late monarchical power; nor to dictate to her enemies a peace that can materially affect their ancient rights, or alter their recent condition. The moment we ſuffer ſuch a derangement to take place in the general ſyſtem, we may date the æra of our own decline. Our intereſt conſiſts in retaining a ſuperiority over France: our downfall depends upon her acquiring an aſcendency over us. Never let us loſe ſight of this great and important truth, ſince all that we value, as an independent and happy nation, is connected with it. If, as hiſtory proves, a republican form of government has a greater tendency to kindle wars than a monarchical one like ours, whoſe principle is moderation, and whoſe ſyſtem is juſtice, it is

more than probable that the French will be early ambitious to try their arms againſt us. And viewing the progreſs of their revolution in this light, it behoves us anxiouſly to conſider, what effect this great event may have upon our own independence hereafter, and what may be its immediate influence upon our preſent condition? With reſpect to the latter, we have already, with grief and indignation, beheld it exciting impiety, and kindling a ſpirit of ſedition among us; and with regard to the former, we can only preſume that their object will be to aſpire at a ſuperiority of power and reſources over us. The queſtion then is—will they be more likely to attain it under their preſent, than beneath their ancient form of government? The probability is, that they will, if we may preſume to judge from events that have recently occurred. For, if in the infancy of their preſent conſtitution, convulſed by faction at home, and waging diſtant wars abroad, with officers ſcarcely to diſcipline their troops, or generals to lead them to the field; they have, by the mere energy of their numerous hordes, been enabled to baffle and ſubdue the braveſt armies united to oppoſe them;

them; what may they not be able to effect, in a war againſt England hereafter, when the repoſe of a few years peace ſhall have imparted ſtability to the government they may form, and enabled them to turn their attention to their navy, which their preſent embarraſſments have conſiderably impaired? In the plenitude of regal power, they never equalled the exertions they have made in the commencement of their republican career. What then, may not be apprehended from it, in the hour of its meridian height? It ſeems but reaſonable to conclude, that with increaſed reſources, and extended power, both of which will be the probable conſequence of their preſent ſituation and ſyſtem, they will become capable of exertions infinitely ſuperior to any we have hitherto experienced in our former wars with them; and that the very change produced, from the alteration of their government, on the manners of the people, by rendering them more turbulent, will render them more warlike, and expoſe us oftener to the calamities of war than heretofore, with the additional diſadvantage of having to encounter a more powerful and determined enemy than we have hitherto oppoſed.

It muſt therefore evidently appear, that our future proſpects are materially interwoven with the progreſs which this revolution may make in Europe. Our deareſt intereſts are all connected with the national pre-eminence we have attained, and our exertions ſhould all be directed to preſerve the ſuperiority we have acquired. The moment France is permitted, by conqueſt, to grow more powerful, that ſuperiority is endangered; and in proportion as theirs increaſes, ours muſt decay. If, therefore, we value our laws, our property, our liberties, and our religion, we ought on no account to ſuffer France to become greater than ſhe is; for the inevitable conſequence of ſuch an aggrandizement in the progreſs of time will be, either to reduce us to a ſecondary degree of influence; to overthrow our conſtitution by the treacherous aid of internal ſuccour; or finally by the ſuperiority of their arms and reſources, in conjunction with this, to reduce us to the degraded condition of a department of their empire. It cannot be argued, againſt the exiſting proofs they have exhibited of their diſpoſition to extend their power and dominion, that we have little to apprehend from ſuch a change, as we have

have ſeen the two greateſt powers upon the continent, experience a material depreſſion in their power and reſources, even in the preſent early ſtage of their war with France. And if we admit, as experience proves, that the French have exceeded the efforts of their former armies in the preſent campaign, it follows, that when they are engaged in a war with us, (which it has ever been the object of a great republic to force upon its neighbours) they will ſtruggle for the empire of the ſeas with a power and an energy to which we have hitherto been ſtrangers. Who could have anticipated the recent triumphs of their arms? If then, their exertions upon this element are only in a ratio with their victories upon the continent—who will contend that the moſt ſerious and alarming conſequences are not to be apprehended from them by England? Why ſhould we diſcredit the practibility of the latter, when no one believed the poſſibility of the former? Yet, it has happened. Let us not, therefore, be over confident, but admit the poſſibility, to guard againſt the miſchief: wiſdom ſhould be cautious, it is only folly that is blind. What ſecurity have we, that when they have eſtabliſhed

bliſhed their own government, they will not endeavour to humble us? We can neither confide in their gratitude, their faith, nor their good will; for we have witneſſed them upon almoſt every occaſion of their intercourſe, depart from moderation, or deviate from principle. And we now behold them fomenting diſcord among us, in order to render Great Britain more vulnerable to their attacks hereafter. They are not contented, like the Romans, to leave to the vanquiſhed their laws, their manners, and their cuſtoms; but they ſeek to engraft on the ſoil they ſubdue, the poiſonous root of their own inſtitutions. The very proſpect therefore of their increaſing their poſſeſſions, is enough to awaken our jealouſy, and to point out the neceſſity of keeping down that power, which if once permitted to raiſe its arm above us, will probably only be lifted to our deſtruction.

It is therefore evident, that the very dread of ſuch an event is a ſubject of ſerious alarm, and that we ought rather to embark in a war with France, than permit her in the ſmalleſt degree to endanger our future tranquillity, by a farther acceſſion of power,

France feels no ſentiments towards England but ſuch as are grounded in a deſire to injure us: ſuperior to her hitherto in arts, in ſcience, and in arms, and poſſeſſing, as we do, from our induſtry, a larger portion of the commerce of Europe, ſhe views our pre-eminence with an eye of jealouſy, and is only waiting for a favourable opportunity to do us all the injury in her power. We ought, therefore, to be upon our guard, by anticipating ſuch an event, if we are not deſirous of experiencing it, and we ſhould immediately embrace ſuch meaſures as are moſt likely to prevent it, and to enſure for centuries, the duration of our ſafety and independence. We ſhould compel them to revoke their decree of the 19th of November 1792; we ſhould oblige them to deſiſt from their irruptions into every country around them, and to reſtore their uſurpations. The cauſe of Europe ſhould be ours, for it is the cauſe of peace, religion, and humanity: if ſhe is convulſed, we are ſhaken; the aggreſſion upon the rights of our allies ſhould be redreſſed: we muſt recall them to their original principle of abſtaining from conqueſt, and the conſuming fire of democracy muſt only be ſuffered to deſolate their own territories; all

other meaſures tend but to leave a ground for future conteſt; whilſt a vigorous enforcement of theſe will inſure to us the approbation and ſupport of every civilized nation, and raiſe the glory of England to a higher ſummit than it has yet attained.

Let every Engliſhman, therefore, be impreſſed with a conviction of this truth, that France has ever been our natural enemy, and wiſhes, at this moment, to deſtroy us. Let him be perſuaded, that her hatred can only be made harmleſs, by judiciouſly reſtraining her power. Let him be convinced, that if her power ſhould ever become ſuperior to our own, we ſhall ſink under its weight: and let him be ſatisfied, that to prevent ſo great an evil happening to this country, a war with France is not only a juſtifiable, but even a deſirable object. In our preſent ſituation, there is every appearance that it would be a proſperous and popular meaſure: we have already a good cauſe to juſtify it, in the decree of the 19th of November, the aggreſſion upon the rights of our allies, the progreſs of their uſurpations, and the notoriety of their intercourſe with the diſaffected in this

this country. And we have, in the ſteadineſs, the loyalty, and the wealth of a great people, an amplitude of reſource, and inclination, to conduct it with vigor; for who would not cheerfully ſubmit to additional burdens, to ſave his country from becoming hereafter a province of France? Such is their end, ſuch is their aim, and ſuch will will be their ſucceſs, if we do not embrace the great opportunity preſented to us, of conſolidating, upon a firmer baſis than we have yet beheld, the exiſtence of our conſtitution, and the duration of our power.

War is undoubtedly a calamity to be deplored in general, but there are ſituations in which it may become a bleſſing, by ſaving us from a greater evil. The preſent appears to be that caſe, which of all others is the moſt likely to be approved by the people of England, and to end in their advantage. It is not a war of ambition, it is not a war of conqueſt, but it is a war of defence. It has for its object to protect the very exiſtence of thoſe laws, that freedom, and that religion, upon which their happineſs is eſtabliſhed, and to ſecure their continuance for ages, by

curbing the power, and reſtraining the inordinate ambition of France. Theſe are great objects; they are worthy the collected exertions of the country; and may, doubtleſs, be attained through the valor and wiſdom of the people: only let us be firm, and we ſhall ſucceed; divided, and we fall; united, and we conquer. Rather let us endure every evil than be addreſſed as a vanquiſhed people, before we have drawn the ſword; for what is peace, but a prelude to ſhame, when we are trampled upon with impunity? But, above all, let us court the calamity of a war, in preference to realizing the wicked hopes of the republicans and levellers, by entering into an alliance with France, as they have perfidiouſly ſuggeſted. For as it is but wiſe to ſelect the leaſt of two evils, ſo aſſuredly the former is every way preferable to the latter. What would be the conſequence, at preſent, of an alliance with France, but diſhonour and diſgrace to England? What would it be, but to league falſehood with ſincerity, impiety with religion, immorality with virtue, and cruelty with humanity? Such an intercourſe, with ſuch a nation, would only tend to facilitate more ſpeedily the introduction of their

poiſonous philoſophy into this country, to contaminate the manners and the morals of the people, and finally to deſtroy that purity of character, which conſtitutes at once their felicity and pride. All other evils are but ſecondary, compared with the intolerable grievance we ſhould experience, if this fatal idea of an alliance were to be realized; for it would preſent to us nothing to hope, and leave us every thing to dread. If morality and religion are the foundations of public happineſs, what could be expected from a nation, where atheiſm ſtalks in triumph, and depravity glories in her turpitude? What could be expected, but ſhame in the intercourſe, and diſhonour from the deed? Let us therefore abjure the thought, that an alliance ſo dangerous can ever be propoſed, by any who value their own reputation, or prize the happineſs and honour of their country.

Whilſt, then, the National Convention of France, like the heroes of Homer, are throwing the gauntlet of defiance around them, let us oppoſe to the ſwagger of threat the equable ſpirit of Britiſh diſdain. It is eaſy to perceive, from their haughty tone, how much mode-

moderation is chaſed from their councils, and what would be the language they would uſe, if victory gave them a right to preſcribe. Deceived by fallacious report, they are ruſhing to ruin, by provoking us to war; and ſoon they will have to repent, that they liſtened to men, who, ignorant of the real ſituation of England, have made them the credulous tools of their wicked deſigns.—It is true, we have to contend for an awful ſtake, in the preſervation of the independence, and glory of our country; but the larger the pledge, the greater will be the exertion. Guided by the polar ſtar of experience, we know where to rally; and feel we are ſafe, whilſt the King and the Conſtitution are unhurt. We have nothing to dread, but the fallacy of ſyſtem and the danger of experiment; theſe are more powerful cauſes of terror than any the French can excite, and relieved from the apprehenſion of experiencing them, we may ſafely look forward to future ſucceſs. At preſent, we ſhould adjourn, to a ſeaſon of quiet, the ardor of ſpeculative conteſt, and reſign, at the ſhrine of patriotiſm, the rancour of political animoſity. It is ſufficient to be told, from authority, that the nation is threat-

ened

ened with external danger, to call for unanimity among us, and to animate every real Engliſhman to concur in protecting the public weal. Let us therefore be united in our ſentiments, with reſpect to the policy of oppoſing the exertions of our inveterate foes to deſtroy our happy conſtitution; and let us co-operate with vigor, in preſerving that happy pre-eminence to which we are arrived, through the wiſdom, the valor, and the virtues of the people. Without this, we ſhall only exhibit the impoveriſhed efforts of declining ſtrength, and periſh like other great empires, who fell more from the internal wounds of civil diſcord, than the laſting victories of invading enemies.

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